

ONE HUNDREDTH LEGISLATURE

FIRST SESSION

**LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION 39**

Introduced by Johnson, 37; Hansen, 42; Howard, 9; Pankonin, 2;  
Synowiecki, 7

Read first time February 26, 2007

Committee: Health and Human Services

WHEREAS, the Legislature regards access to mental health and substance abuse treatment to be of paramount importance to the citizens of our state; and

WHEREAS, President George W. Bush's proposed budget for the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2008 includes significantly decreased appropriations to a number of programs that are critical in providing services to citizens with mental illness and substance abuse disorders; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that individuals experiencing problems associated with mental health and substance abuse are having difficulty accessing appropriate services in a timely manner. This is evidenced by extensive wait lists for individuals requiring mental health and substance abuse services in the community. Currently, over one thousand people are on wait lists for such services in Nebraska; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that delays in accessing

mental health and substance abuse services can exacerbate conditions for those consumers needing such professional intervention. Wait lists and access delays demonstrate an inadequate capacity for behavioral treatment services in Nebraska to sufficiently and timely meet consumer need in both rural and urban settings; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that insurance companies are increasingly limiting their liability for claims for mental health and substance abuse services. The diminishing availability for mental health and substance abuse treatment resources for the insured population has impacted public resources. An increasing number of consumers are forced to access the public behavioral health system to meet mental health and substance abuse needs; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature considers federal funding for mental health and substance abuse treatment to be critical in providing an appropriate level of access to proper treatment for citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that a decrease in federal funding for mental health and substance abuse treatment will provide substantive harm to a vulnerable population and will negatively impact the quality of life for our citizens.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA, FIRST SESSION:

1. That the Legislature urges the members of Nebraska's congressional delegation to ensure that Congress fully fund mental

health and substance abuse treatment.

2. That the Legislature urges the Governor to use his best efforts to work with the Nebraska congressional delegation to ensure that this funding is restored.

3. That the Legislature proclaims that all components of state government should work together to ensure mental health and substance abuse treatment funding.

4. That the Governor and each member of Nebraska's congressional delegation receive a copy of this resolution.